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That knowing old master, whose distillation of the flower of Greek culture has given color and flavor to all modern criticism, tells us

“Non satis pulchra esse poemata; dulcia sunt,
Et quocunque volent animum auditoris agunt.”

It is odd that he should not only have alliterated, but rhymed his couplet, as if to make the sound answer to the sense; though we confess that to our barbarian ear the meaning is better than the music. The awful question hovers on our lips, Would the Latins have rhymed, if they could? The ghosts of departed pedants shriek faintly (*τεττίγεσσιν ἐοικότες*) and tear their honored wings as we utter it. However it may have been, Mr. Howells has chosen to yield his privilege as a modern, and to write his poem in unrhymed hexameters. But he obeys the Horatian precept in being always entertaining. This secret, commonly one of the last an author attains to, Mr. Howells seems indeed to have learned without the usual apprenticeship, by one of those private arrangements which the Muse connives at in her favorites. And let no one think it such a simple affair either. It is a *segreto a voces*, to be sure, that is cried aloud at the corners of the streets by a certain lady, who gets no more heed than an oyster-wench. But for all that, only the elect find it out. No, it is easy to be wise, heavy, instructive, obscure, profound, moral, eloquent, and whatever one should not be in the literature of entertainment, but it is wonderfully hard to be light and agreeable. It is like the tone of good society. Without it, a man may have all the cardinal virtues, but they are nothing to the purpose. When we say, then, that Mr. Howells interests and amuses us, we mean to pay him a very high compliment indeed. The poem before us is one that refined people will like to read. It is graceful, fluent, gleaming with that pleasant humor natural to Mr. Howells, and rises once or twice to a fervor as near passion as is in keeping with the lower tone of narrative poetry. In short, it is all it pretends to be, which is as much as to say that it is artistic, — a great merit in these days.

18. — *Lecture on the Uses of the Study of History.* Printed for the Class Committee. Cambridge. 1868. 8vo. pp. 32.

WE feel almost as if we were committing an indiscretion in noticing at all a pamphlet printed as manuscript. But we have been so much struck both with the matter and the tone of this lecture as to be tempted into thus publicly saying how desirable we think it that a larger circle should share in the pleasure and instruction we have ourselves enjoyed.

While we are debating whether our oldest college is doing all it might to modernize its methods of teaching, it is gratifying to be thus convinced that one course of study, and one leading, perhaps, to as solid results as any, is under such competent guidance. The soundness of thought, the cautiousness of statement, and the breadth of view which characterize this academical discourse, are in themselves the most pithy demonstration of the uses of the special science it illustrates. If the atmosphere of the past does nothing more than produce the ripe suavity of mind and firmness of judgment which we find in these pages, it must indeed be healthful, and we can think of a good many patients who would be benefited by breathing it from time to time. Professor Torrey enforces with the clear succinctness of practised thought the advantage which men of this and the other calling may find in the study of history. But there is none of the easy generalization of the smatterer. He also defines clearly the limitations to which every well-considered statement of doctrine is subject. Indeed, his treatment of a topic where a little partiality would be pardonable is another proof, if any were wanting, that fairness of mind is not the least valuable result of thorough culture. To show the friendly and even helpful relation of one study to all the rest, as it is done here, is an excellent service to young men about to enter upon professions where they will run the risk of being narrowed into specialists. We are glad to hear that Mr. Torrey is to deliver a course of public lectures in Baltimore. We wish he could oftener overcome the modesty which has hitherto confined his great powers and attainments to the duties of his chair, and the appreciation of friends. We cannot leave the lecture without saying that the style is in keeping with the substance, clear, idiomatic, pointed,—in short, English.

19. — *Life and Letters of WILDER DWIGHT, Lieut.-Col. Second Mass. Inf. Vols.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1868. 8vo. pp. 351.

IF the value of a life were to be estimated by its events and not by its spirit, if its success were in what it had accomplished rather than in what it was, then the biography of a young man killed in battle at thirty, with only a single year's share in that larger existence which impinges upon history, would seem one of the most fruitless of human undertakings. And yet to die for one's country as this youth did, with a clear understanding of what it was he gave his life for, and to do it before one had otherwise made that mark on the world which he might fairly expect to make, "to cease and make no noise," may be fairly reckoned among the highest kinds of success; for it was nothing less